The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) have established strict quality standards for drinking water. These standards are designed to protect consumers against disease-causing bacteria and other harmful substances. EPA requires public water systems to send their customers an annual report containing information about their drinking water quality and compliance with the standards.

We are pleased to present the information contained in this report to you and hope that it will be both informative and helpful in making personal health-based decisions regarding your drinking water consumption. We welcome your comments and questions. We may be reached during normal business hours by calling 803-545-3300. You are also welcome to attend regularly scheduled meetings of City Council that are generally held the first and third Wednesdays of each month at City Hall, 1737 Main Street at 10:00 a.m. Contact the Public Relations Department at 803-545-3020 for time and location or visit www.columbiasc.net.

For More Information
City of Columbia
Water Quality Complaints/Billing – 803-545-3300
Customer Care Center –
S.C. Dept. of Health and Environmental Control
Bureau of Water 803-898-4300
EPA - Drinking Water Hotline 800-426-4791
National Lead Information Clearinghouse 800-424-LEAD
Consumer Product Safety Commission 800-638-2722

Esté informe contiene información muy importante sobre el agua que usted toma. Tradúscalo o hable con un amigo quien lo entienda bien.

The City of Columbia operates two drinking water treatment plants. One draws water from the Broad River Diversion Canal (Canal) and the other draws from Lake Murray (Lake). The two plants together produce an average of 60 million gallons of water per day that is furnished to approximately 375,000 people in Richland and Lexington Counties through more than 2,400 miles of underground pipeline. Generally, the Lake Murray Plant serves the area west of the Broad River and the area north of Interstate 20 and the Columbia Canal Plant serves the remaining area. The system is designed, however, so that water can be supplied to the entire service area by either plant.

The SCDHEC has completed a comprehensive water assessment report on the Broad River Diversion Canal (also referred to as the Columbia Canal) and Lake Murray. This Source Water Assessment report is available and can be reviewed at 1136 Washington Street or by contacting 803-545-3400.

City of Columbia Water Service Area

Where Does Columbia’s Water Come From?

The City of Columbia Water works
Columbia, South Carolina
2012 Water Quality Report
Public Water System 4010001

Columbia Water: Quality on Tap Since 1835

March 2013

During March, 2013, the City of Columbia failed to notify SCDHEC within 24 hours of a sample testing positive for E. Coli during routine, preliminary testing. Additional testing did not show the presence of E. Coli.

Due to an oversight, SCDHEC was notified eleven (11) days after the sample results came back positive.
What is In Columbia’s Drinking Water?

The City’s DHEC-certified laboratory performs more than 200,000 analyses each year to ensure that the water the City supplies to its customers meets all EPA and DHEC standards. Additional analyses are performed by DHEC, the state agency that regulates and oversees public water systems. Samples are sent from every stage of the treatment systems and at hundreds of points throughout more than 2,400 miles of pipeline that make up the City’s distribution system. The City also conducts voluntary testing for microbial contaminants. In 2004, the City joined and has since been participating in the federal Safe Water Program, a group of water systems in South Carolina to ensure its water system’s ability to prevent any of microbial contaminations and to implement any actions that are appropriate in accomplishing this goal. The City’s drinking water met all state and federal requirements during 2012, and is considered safe to drink. The substances listed below and any contaminants sampled during 2012 are discussed in detail below.

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water poses a health risk. More usually, contaminants are present in water because of their presence in the environment. The sources of drinking water (both tap water and bottled water) include rivers, lakes, streams, ponds, reservoirs, springs, and wells. As water travels over the surface of the land or through the ground, it dissolves naturally occurring minerals and radioactive material, and can pick up substances resulting from the presence of animals or from human activity. Microorganisms, such as viruses and bacteria, which may come from a variety of sources such as agriculture, stormwater runoff and residential use.

Table: What do these terms and symbols mean?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Highest Level Allowed (MCL)</th>
<th>Detected Level</th>
<th>Range of Detection</th>
<th>Goal (MCLG)</th>
<th>Violation</th>
<th>Year Sampled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Organic Compounds**

**Stage 1 (Jan–Mar 2012)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
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<th>Detected Level</th>
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</table>

**Stage 2 (Apr–Dec 2012)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Substance</th>
<th>Highest Level Allowed (MCL)</th>
<th>Detected Level</th>
<th>Range of Detection</th>
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</table>

**Microorganisms**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Goal (MCLG)</th>
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**Total Coliform Bacteria**

<table>
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**Disinfectants**

<table>
<thead>
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</table>

**MBRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal)**

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<th>Substance</th>
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<th>Goal (MCLG)</th>
<th>Violation</th>
<th>Year Sampled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The EPA requires that all annual water quality reports contain the following:

**Action Level:** A limit that is not a MCL, that applies to contaminants such as lead and copper that enter the water after treatment. Action levels may trigger special monitoring, public education or treatment techniques.

**Detected Level:** The concentration of a substance detected in a water sample. The detected levels specified in the above tables are the highest levels detected in multiple samples water collected except for Total Organic Carbon (TOC) or lack specified otherwise. For TOC, the specified removal rate is the rate required by the SCDEQ based on data reported by the City.

**MCL (Maximum Contaminant Limit):** The EPA’s target level for a contaminant below which there are no known or suspected health effects. The MCLG is not necessarily a level achievable with currently available treatment techniques.

**MRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level):** The maximum level of a disinfectant in drinking water at which no known or suspected adverse effect on the health of persons would occur and that allows for an adequate margin of safety. MRDLG’s are non-enforceable public health goals.

**NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Unit):** An units to measure water clarity. (parts per billion) – One part in a billion parts (equivalent to one penny in $10,000,000). (parts per million) – One part in a million parts (equivalent to one penny in $10,000).

**RAS (Running Annual Average):** An average of the four quarters in a calendar year.

**TT (Treatment Technique):** A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.

**WHO Percentile:** The “Action Level” for lead and copper for a water system that serves more than 100,000 people.

**MBRDL (Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal):** The maximum level of a disinfectant in drinking water at which no known or suspected adverse effect on the health of persons would occur and that allows for an adequate margin of safety. MBRDL’s are non-enforceable public health goals.

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